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ABSTRACT

This study examines the education and employment outcomes of black youth whose families moved from mostly-black housing projects in the city to either mostly-white suburbs or other mostly-black urban areas through the Gautreaux Housing Assistance Program in the Chicago (Illinois) area. In interviews with families who had moved 8 to 13 years earlier, the study examined: high school retention, grades, high school track placement, college attendance, employment, wages, job prestige, and job benefits. In spite of concerns about permanent disadvantages due to discrimination and competition with white peers, the suburban youth adults did significantly better than did those in the city in practically all areas studied. Compared with the group that moved out of the projects and into other mostly-black city areas, youth in the suburban group were more likely to be: (1) in high school; (2) in a college high school track; (3) in a four-year college; (4) in a job; (5) in a job with benefits; and (6) within the education and employment systems. In their comments, mothers and youth pointed to the positive effects of higher educational standards in the suburbs, additional academic help from suburban teachers, greater access to information about college enrollment from suburban schools, and positive suburban role models. (Author/JB)

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THE EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OF LOW-INCOME BLACK YOUTH IN WHITE SUBURBS

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THE EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OF LOW-INCOME BLACK YOUTH IN WHITE SUBURBS

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The Education and Employment of Low-Income Black Youth in White Suburbs

This study examines the education and employment outcomes of black youth whose families moved from mostly-black housing projects in the city to either mostly-white suburbs or other mostly-black urban areas, as part of a housing assistance program. In interviews with families who had moved eight to thirteen years earlier the study examined: high school retention, grades, high school track placement, college attendance, employment, wages, job prestige, and job benefits. In spite of concerns about permanent disadvantages due to discrimination and competition with white peers, the suburban young adults did significantly better than those in the city in practically all areas studied. In their comments, mothers and youth pointed to the positive effects of higher educational standards in the suburbs, additional academic help from suburban teachers, greater access to information about college enrollment from suburban schools, and positive suburban role models. We conclude by considering policy implications of this study.

THE EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OF LOW-INCOME BLACK YOUTH IN WHITE SUBURBS

Despite extensive research on school integration, residential integration has rarely been studied. Indeed, racial and socio-economic integration rarely occurs in American society. This study examines how low-income black youth are affected by living in white, middle-class suburbs. This study offers a rare opportunity. In 1976, as a result of the Gautreaux housing desegregation lawsuit, the federal government funded a program to assist low-income black families in Chicago to move into private housing throughout the Chicago metropolitan area through Section 8 rent subsidies. Over 4000 families have moved through this program, some to primarily white suburbs and others to mostly black urban areas. Thus, while both groups of low-income black families come from public housing, they moved to environments that differ not only in type of housing, but also in community, race, and income level. Along with these differences come different types of schools, employment opportunities, and other opportunities. This study investigates how the suburb-movers and city-movers differ in education and employment: grades, finishing high school, going to college, and getting a job.

History of Gautreaux

The Gautreaux lawsuit is one of the major housing desegregation cases to come before the Supreme Court. Filed in 1966 against the Chicago Housing Authority and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on behalf of public housing residents, this suit charged "that these agencies had employed racially discriminatory policies in the administration of the Chicago low rent public housing program" (Peroff, Davis, Jones, 1979). Rulings by the District Court, Appeals Court, and the U.S. Supreme Court agreed with this charge. The Supreme Court's consent decree in 1976 led to the Gautreaux program, a unique remedy whose purpose was to redress the discriminatory nature of Chicago's public housing program.

Administered by the non-profit Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities in Chicago, the Gautreaux program allows public housing residents to receive Section 8 housing certificates and move to private apartments either in mostly-white suburbs or in Chicago. Although in principle, participants have choices about where they move, in actual practice they move where the program happens to have housing openings at the time. These openings are in either the city or the suburbs, and allocations tend to approximate a random selection. As a result, this program resembles a natural experiment. The Gautreaux program provides an unusual opportunity to investigate the effects of living in areas that differ significantly by racial make-up, income level, and location.

An evaluation of the Gautreaux Housing Demonstration project described who was participating in this new program (Peroff, Davis, and Jones, 1979). Participants were typically single parent black women less than 35 years of age, who were very low-income and who had children living with them. The report stated that most Gautreaux participants felt their quality of life had increased and were content that they had participated in the program.

Popkin and Rosenbaum (1989) studied neighborhood effects on labor market experiences of adult participants. Comparing city and suburban Gautreaux participants, they found that suburban movers were more likely to have a job than city-movers.

Rosenbaum, Kulieke, and Rubinowitz (1988) studied the program's effects on children. They focussed on four main areas: children's school and neighborhood environments, children's social interactions, and children's schooling outcomes. In the two areas directly concerned with school, the authors noted that when compared to Gautreaux participants living in the city, Gautreaux participants in the suburbs had smaller classes, higher satisfaction with teachers and course offered, better attitudes about school, and no permanent decline in grades, relative school performance, or attendance. They noted that the "higher academic standards in the suburbs created academic problems for some children and opportunities for improved academic

achievement in others, but it is difficult to assess the extent of each with precision" (Rosenbaum, Rubinowitz, and Kulieke, 1986, p.160). That study examined young children with an average age of twelve. The present study examines these children seven years later as adolescents and youth.

The Effects of Desegregation on Blacks' School Achievement

Research finds conflicting results on the effects of school desegregation. Some studies find that blacks attending desegregated schools have better outcomes (Crain and Weisman, 1972; Hoelter, 1982; Holland and Andre, 1987), worse outcomes (Grant, 1984), or the same outcomes (Gerard and Miller, 1975) as in segregated schools. St. John (1975) argues that the effects of school desegregation on black and white students may be both positive and negative, depending upon other factors. One of the factors may be how accepted the black students are.

Unlike most desegregation programs which involve busing, Gautreaux creates both residential and school integration, and it does so with little visibility, thus reducing backlash and stigma. Low-income black families moved into apartment buildings occupied mostly by middle-income whites and located in middle-income white suburbs. As a result, children arrived in the suburban schools as community residents, not as part of a busing program from a city every day. Moreover, residential integration provided the possibility for social integration of old and new residents.

Hypothesis

The basic question for these analyses is whether transplanting ill-prepared poor children into suburban schools would put them at a competitive disadvantage. We pose this issue as the Permanent Disadvantage Hypothesis: Because suburbs have different standards than the city, low-income youth in the suburbs will suffer a permanent disadvantage and will have lower education and employment than city-movers.

There are many reasons to expect that low-income youth may find it hard to meet suburban standards: their low-income background may make them less well-prepared or less motivated than middle-income suburban youth; their low socio-economic status may give them attitudes and behaviors deemed "undesirable" by the middle-income school staff or employers who make decisions affecting their education and employment; or racial discrimination may prevent them from being given full access to suburban resources. For any or all of these reasons, we predict that these suburban youth will have less education and employment than city-movers who do not face these barriers.

A contradictory expectation is that rather than suffering from permanent disadvantage in the suburbs, suburban students will benefit from the higher educational and employment opportunities in the suburbs, and their suburban classmates will serve as role models for achievement. Before analyzing student outcomes, we describe the two groups of schools.

School Academic Standards

As a way of comparing schools, the state of Illinois collects mean eleventh grade reading scores, mean ACT scores, and mean graduation rates from all high schools in the state. This information is published by the State Department of Education every year. We used this information to compare the schools the Gautreaux students attended.

A reading test is administered to all eleventh grade students in the state of Illinois. This reading test has a range from 1 to 500. The state average for 1990 was 250. The suburban schools had significantly higher reading scores than the city schools in 1990 (259 in suburban schools vs. 198 in city schools; $p < .0001$).

The ACT is the college admissions test most often taken in Illinois, since it is required by the state colleges and universities. In 1990, a perfect ACT score was 36. The national average in 1990 was 20.6, and the Illinois state average was 20.9. As with the reading test scores, mean

ACT scores from city schools were significantly lower than the suburban schools' scores in 1990 (suburban schools 21.5 vs. city schools 16.1, $p < .0001$). While these scores only represent the achievement of a fraction of students, they are an important group -- those who aspire to college.

The graduation rate was computed as the ratio of the number graduating in 1989 divided by the number entering high school four years earlier. The graduation rates were much higher in the suburban schools than the city schools (85.7% for the suburbs vs. 33.5% for the city , $p < .0001$). In the Chicago metropolitan area as a whole in 1980 (i.e. includes suburbs in Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will counties), 66.2% of all students graduated from high school (for blacks this figure was 55.3%).

The numbers indicate not only a quantitative difference but also a major qualitative difference in the academic standards of city and suburban schools. Suburban schools' average reading and ACT scores are very close to the state averages, whereas the city schools' scores are significantly lower than the state averages. The information on graduation rates also suggests radically different expectations between city and suburban schools. Students attending suburban schools learn that it is normal to expect that one will graduate with one's class, because this happens most of the time (that is, for about 86% of the students). On the other hand, students in city high schools learn that it is normal not to graduate with one's class, since this happens for only about one-third of city students.

Methods and Data

This paper looks at the school and employment achievements of youth in the Gautreaux program, comparing suburban movers with city-movers. The first group were families who moved to white suburban communities (mean = 96% white). The second group of families moved to Chicago census tracts with a black composition greater than 70% (actual mean = 99% black). The mother and a randomly preselected child from each family interviewed in 1982 were

reinterviewed in 1989. The interviews included both standard closed-ended scales and open-ended questions.

The program's procedures create a quasi-experimental design. While all participants come from the same low-income black city neighborhoods (usually housing projects), some move to middle-income white suburbs, while others move to low-income black urban neighborhoods. In principle, participants have choices about where they move, but in actual practice, participants are assigned to urban or suburban locations in a quasi-random manner. Apartment availability is determined by housing agents who do not deal with clients, and apartment offerings are unrelated to client interest. Counselors offer clients units as they become available according to their position on the waitlist, regardless of clients' locational preference. Although clients can refuse an offer, very few do so, since they are unlikely to get another. As a result, participants' preferences for city or suburbs have little to do with where they end up moving.

Therefore, the city group can be used as a no-change control group that can be compared with the suburban group in order to determine effects of residential desegregation. The city group is a strong control group in that it controlled for the selection effects of Gautreaux participation and the effects of moving. The groups showed no significant differences on any important demographic variables.

The study interviewed children from families who entered the Gautreaux program between 1976-1981. As with the adult sample (Rosenbaum and Popkin, 1990), the city and suburban samples of children's families were very similar. In 1989, the children had similar ages (18.8 suburban, 18.2 city), with a range of 15-25 years in both groups. The families were predominantly female-headed in both the suburban (86%) and control (88%) groups. Virtually none of the mothers in either group had finished college, similar proportions had finished high school (47% suburban and 43% control), and their average years of education was virtually identical (12.09 vs. 12.03). Thus, there are no differences between families who moved to the city or

suburbs in such human capital characteristics as education and previous work experience. The city-movers are a good comparison group for the suburban movers.

Gender composition was the only difference between children in the suburban and control samples (males: 61.5% in suburbs, 42.9% in city). To remove the potential confounding influence, all analyses examine the influence of suburb/city after controlling for gender.

Generalizability

Generalizing to other low-income blacks is more difficult. The program tried to avoid overcrowding, late rent payments, and building damage by not admitting families with more than four children, large debts, or unacceptable housekeeping. But none of these criteria was extremely selective.

The program had three kinds of selection criteria which could make participants distinctive from other housing project residents, but none of these was extremely selective. First, because suburbs rarely have large apartments, the program selects families with four or fewer children. Yet 95 percent of AFDC families have four or fewer children and 90 percent have three or fewer (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, 1987), so this is not a serious restriction. Second, as in the Section 8 program, Gautreaux applicants are screened to make sure that they pay their rent regularly and that they have some source of income (usually AFDC). The Leadership Council estimates that about 12 percent are rejected by the credit check or rental record. Third, applicants are eliminated whose housekeeping would make them undesirable tenants. This evaluation has the most potential for biases, but we saw no evidence of such. Accompanying a counselor on such a visit, we noted that counselors looked for damage to apartments and general cleanliness (taking garbage out), but the counselor ignored minor disorder and did not check closets. In actual practice, only about 13 percent of families are rejected on these grounds (Peroff, Davis, and Jones, 1979). Therefore, Gautreaux participants are probably

not typical of public housing residents in general; they are in some respects among the "best" public housing residents. They have smaller families, they have good rent-paying records, and they meet housekeeping standards (on the day of the counselor's scheduled appointment).

However, the requirements of the Gautreaux program are not so stringent as to make participants totally atypical. Program experience indicates that the three criteria sequentially eliminated 5 percent, 13 percent, and 12 percent, so together they reduce the eligible pool by less than 30 percent (.95 x .88 x .87= .727). Self-selection may further reduce generalizability, but if these factors are correlated with the above three criteria, their additional impact may be quite small. It seems most likely that Gautreaux families represent over half of public housing residents, but that is a very rough guess. With over 100,000 families in Chicago housing projects, the program participants are likely to represent a large number of people.

To address this issue further, we compared Gautreaux participants with a random sample of AFDC recipients in Chicago (Popkin, 1988). Gautreaux participants are similar to the Chicago AFDC sample in their length of time on public assistance (about 7 years) and their marital status (about 45 percent never married, 10 percent currently married). However, Gautreaux adult participants are less likely to be high school drop-outs (39 percent pre-move vs. 50 percent), tend to be older (median age of 34 vs. 31), and have fewer children (mean of 2.5 vs 3.0). However, they are more likely to be second generation AFDC recipients (44 percent vs. 32 percent). These comparisons suggest that while Gautreaux participants may be slightly higher status than the average public assistance recipient, most differences are not large.

In sum, although these selection criteria make this an above-average group of housing project residents, they are not a "highly creamed" group. All are very low-income blacks, are current or former welfare recipients and have lived most of their lives in impoverished inner-city neighborhoods.

The outcomes considered follow a developmental progression in the school arena and in the employment arena. For the school arena, we look at different outcomes at different ages: if 17 or younger,whether the youth is still in high school; grades; whether the youth was in a college or non-college high school track; if the youth is 18 or older, college attendance, type of college attended and degree pursued in college. In the employment arena we look at two different outcomes: whether the youth is employed now and if so, the status of the job in terms of pay, prestige, and job benefits.

These outcomes not only tell us the student's level of performance, but also serve as indicators of future performance. It must be remembered that because participants in the Gautreaux project are from a low-income minority population, their mothers generally do not have college education or good jobs. Thus, Gautreaux students who are able to gain employment experience or attend college are improving their chances to have more options when they are adults than is typical for low-income minority urban populations. They will be less likely to be dependent on government programs.

High School Dropouts

The Permanent Disadvantage Hypothesis predicts a higher proportion of the suburban youth to be high school dropouts than city youth. Rather than suffer from the disadvantages of poor preparation and possibly race or class discrimination, suburban Gautreaux students would be more likely to drop out of this competitive situation than their city counterparts. What we found is just the opposite: for the youth 17 years or younger, a higher percentage of city youth dropped out of high school than did suburban youth (20% of the city kids vs. less than 5% of the suburban kids; $p<.10$). Gender has no influence on drop-outs, and controlling for gender does not alter the suburban effect.

Instead of the anticipated disadvantage, youth of high school age in the suburbs have an educational advantage over those in the city -- more of the suburban youth are in high school.

Youth on the Gautreaux program seem to benefit from the higher academic standards in the suburbs, rather than suffering from a permanent disadvantage in the suburbs.

Grades

Grades are relative and at the same time are representative of a certain level of achievement. A grade of "C" represents average achievement. Most teachers grade on a curve, with "C" as the modal and mean grade. Because academic standards are higher in the suburban schools than in the city schools, one would expect that a "C" in most city schools represents less achievement than a "C" in most suburban schools. This would be a hazardous inference if city and suburban schools were only slightly different. But we have found that these schools are radically different. The Permanent Disadvantage Hypothesis suggests that suburban Gautreaux children's grades would suffer from being in competition with their suburban classmates who have lived their whole lives in the suburbs and in more affluent families. In contrast, urban Gautreaux students' grades will not suffer as much from this disadvantage, since they continue to attend city schools in low-income black neighborhoods. Therefore, if a "B" city student moves to the suburbs, the higher suburban academic standards will turn the same level of achievement into a lower grade. The city-movers will not experience this achievement decline. So, if the Permanent Disadvantage Hypothesis is supported, we would expect the suburban Gautreaux grades to be lower than the urban Gautreaux grades.

Instead, we find virtually no difference in grades (city: 5.60 vs. suburb: 5.61, n.s.; 5= mostly Cs, 6= mostly Bs and Cs). Gender has no effect on grades (t =0.48), and controlling for gender has no influence on the suburban effect. In contrast with the Permanent Disadvantage Hypothesis, these results suggest that grades have not suffered from the suburban move. In fact, if a "C" grade represents more achievement and learning in a suburban school than in a city school, we might even infer that the suburban movers' achievement is higher than that of the

city-movers. This suggests that the benefit of being in schools with higher academic standards outweighs the disadvantages.

High School Track

Nearly all schools have different curricula for college and non-college bound youth. All schools in our sample used this distinction. High School Track refers to whether students are in high school classes specifically designed to prepare them for college, or whether they are in general track or vocational education track classes. Students in a college high school track are at an educational advantage over students not in a college track (Epstein, 1985; Rosenbaum, 1976). The Permanent Disadvantage Hypothesis proposes that suburban movers would be less likely to get into college track classes than city-movers.

The results contradict this prediction. A significantly higher percentage of suburban movers were in college tracks than were city-movers (40.3% suburbs vs. 23.5% city; $p < .05$, n=106). Gender has no effect on track(t=.03), and controlling for gender has no influence on the suburban effect. Suburban Gautreaux students are more likely to be in high school tracks which prepare them for college than city-movers. Once again we find that the benefits of higher academic standards outweigh the barriers of competition.

College Attendance

The Permanent Disadvantage Hypothesis proposes that suburban movers are less likely to attend college than city-movers. Fifty-five of the Gautreaux youth were 18 years or older at the time they were interviewed. In this group, the rate of college enrollment was significantly higher for students in the suburban sample than city students (54% vs. 21%, $p < .025$). Gender has no effect on college attendance(t=.03), and controlling for gender has no influence on the suburban effect. Again we see that living in the suburbs had a positive effect of encouraging youth to stay in the system.

It is also important to find out what type of college a student is attending. This is because attending a 4 year institution leads to a bachelor's degree, attending a 2 year junior or community college leads to an associate's degree, and attending a trade school leads to a certificate. Among those attending college, almost fifty percent of the suburban movers attend college in 4 year institutions (27% of the 18 years or older sample), whereas only twenty percent of the city-movers attend college in a four year institution (4 % of the 18 years or older sample). In essence, the city-movers had a very small rate of access to four year colleges.

Of those not attending 4 year institutions, two-thirds of the suburban movers are working toward an associate's degree while just half of the city-movers are. Taken together, suburban movers attend better types of colleges than city-movers. Similarly, in response to the question "what degree are you working toward?" almost half of the suburban college students said they were working towards their bachelor's degree, whereas only a fifth of the city college students said they were working towards a B.A.

Taking the college attendance together with the college type and degree-pursued outcomes, it is clear that in this area the suburban students have not suffered because of more challenging educational competition in the suburbs. If anything, they have benefitted from the higher suburban academic standards.

Employment

In the arena of employment, the Permanent Disadvantage Hypothesis suggests that suburban movers would be disadvantaged relative to city-movers because they must compete with middle- income white youth who suburban employers may prefer. On the other hand, the suburban schools may prepare students better for jobs, and suburbs may have more jobs than the city so that suburban movers have better employment outcomes than city-movers. Better job availability could translate not only into more jobs, but also into jobs with better pay, higher prestige, and offering more benefits. Also, suburban youth may be influenced by their friends in

the suburbs, who may serve as role models for them and may encourage them to apply for jobs they might not otherwise have considered.

Working Now

For this outcome, youth answered the question "are you working now?" Contrary to the Permanent Disadvantage hypothesis, a significantly higher proportion of the suburban youth were working than were city youth (75% vs. 41.4%;$p < .005$; n=93). Males are slightly more likely to be working (t=1.42) than females, but after controlling for gender, the suburban effect remains strong and significant (t=2.96). What was the nature of these jobs?

Job Pay

We divided the pay scale into three categories. We find that suburban youth have a significant edge in job pay ($X^2=11.72$, $p < .005$). Forty-three percent of the city youth earn less than $3.50 per hour, whereas only about 9.5 percent of the suburban youth earn this little. On the high end of the scale, about five percent of the city youth workers earn at least $6.50/hour, whereas over 21% of the suburban youth earn this amount. Gender has no effect on job pay for these youth (t=0.15; recall that these are entry jobs), and controlling for gender has no influence on the suburban effect which remains strongly significant (t=3.29). Permanent disadvantage does not keep the suburban youth from getting jobs which pay at least as well as the jobs the city youth have.

Job Prestige

Job prestige is one way of assessing the level of jobs. For these analyses, job prestige is a 3 category variable based on the level of skills needed for a job: 1=unskilled; 2=semi-skilled; 3= skilled. This is a gross distinction. The mean job prestige for suburban jobs is higher than that of the city (1.78 vs. 1.57; p=.16). This difference is not statistically significant , but it is in the same direction as our other employment findings. Suburban youth are more likely to have skilled or semi-skilled jobs than city youth (55.0% vs. 36.4%), although this difference is not statistically

significant (t=1.44). Skilled jobs are the only outcome significantly affected by gender (because of the secretarial and clerical jobs that females get), however, after controlling for gender, suburbs still had no effect. The suburban youth do not suffer in their employment experiences or opportunities by being in the suburbs, and may even profit by being in the suburbs.

Job Benefits

More suburban youth received job benefits with their jobs than did city youth, and this difference was statistically significant ($p < .005$; $n=84$). Over half of the suburban workers (55 2%) received at least one job benefit (such as vacation, sick leave, educational opportunities, or health coverage) and just over one fifth of the city workers (23.1%) received at least one job benefit. Suburban movers were significantly more likely to get job benefits than city-movers. Gender has no effect on benefits ($t = 0.69$), and controlling for gender does not reduce the suburban effect.

Youth who are neither in school nor working

Looking at achievement outcomes is important not only for assessing the children's current achievement, but also because these outcomes serve as indicators for future outcomes for these youth, i.e. what types of education and employment opportunities they will have down the road. One of the greatest risks for youth is to be outside the school and employment systems -- to be gaining neither education nor work experience. This is particularly a problem for low income Black youth. We created a variable which combines employment and education outcomes, i.e. whether the youth are in school or working. To assess this, we grouped youth who were currently in high school or college or working. The Permanent Disadvantage Hypothesis predicts that the suburban movers would be less likely to be involved in school or working than would their city counterparts.

Using the quantitative data gathered from in-person interviews from the youth, we found that a significantly higher proportion of the suburban youth were either in school or working than

were the urban youth (suburb: 90%; city: 74%; $p<.025$, $n=107$). The suburban movers are less likely to be outside of the education and employment systems than the city-movers. In contrast with the Permanent Disadvantage Hypothesis, the suburban Gautreaux youth are more likely than their city counterparts to be working or in school.

Participants' Views of the Reasons for these Effects

Few Americans have lived in both suburbs and inner-city, so the suburban movers have a distinctive vantage point, which may offer new insights on the differences between these environments. While long-term residents of suburbs or public housing lack a point of comparison, those who moved from housing projects to middle-class suburbs can see the differences clearly.

Participants identified several factors which may help explain this study's outcomes. When asked how youths' lives would have been different if they had not moved, safety was the most frequently mentioned difference. Safety was mentioned by both suburban and city participants. Typical comments included: "He would be on drugs,dead or in a gang." "The gangs were running my oldest son, and I moved out here and he finished school without any problem." Getting out of housing projects dramatically improved the level of safety for suburban and city-movers.

But, after safety, the two groups gave different responses. The city-movers mentioned improved housing quality and improved finances from rent supplements, but few noted motivational or educational changes. Indeed, most city-movers went to schools that were similar to the schools they attended when they lived in public housing.

In contrast, suburban movers noted that their new environment stimulated youths' motivation. For example, one respondent noted that her daughter "wouldn't have the drive, the challenge, the desire to advance that's needed to get ahead in life... if we hadn't moved. She wouldn't be in college now." This challenge in the suburbs is contrasted by a city mother's quote about the demoralization in public housing: "The housing project environment brings you

down...makes you not care about the future... living in the type of environment where nobody wants nothing, nobody does nothing, nobody gets up and tries to have nothing." Another mother noted that "If it is cruddy around and run down, your drive is not there--you don't know any other way."

This increased motivation came about for several reasons. First, respondents noted that the suburban schools expected students to achieve at a higher level than city schools. For example, respondents said: "A lot more is expected from you out here. A lot of emphasis on school. You have to succeed. If you don't go to school, you're not gonna be able to make anything of yourself." "The schools in the suburbs academically they are like a hop and a leap over the city. I'm glad I never had to raise my boys in the city. [Compared] academically to a Chicago student, I think they're still way ahead of them." Another mother compared urban and suburban experiences and expectations: "They go to school with all nationalities--it's like the UN out here in DuPage [a suburban county]. They got to learn different lifestyles and it makes them want a better lifestyle. They can go into the city now and look at the kids in the city. I hate to keep reflecting back into the city, but the teenage black boys from Chicago versus the teenage black boys who were raised out here -- it's a whole world apart. It's a big difference." This mother went to some pains to say she did not blame the people themselves, but she felt city children were offered very limited experiences.

The quality of suburban high schools was sometimes likened to college: "The high school program was really geared for college because they did give them work which I thought was college type of work. They really expected the best." Another mother said, "[My son in high school] was ahead of me and could help me with my college work. The academics are ahead [of the city schools]."

An important aspect of school quality is <u>how</u> teachers teach. Suburban mothers noted teachers' expectations: "Teachers want all the kids to do better." "They know he can do better,

so they expect him to do better." "The teacher makes her check her answers if she finishes early." "When [my daughter] doesn't do her work, the teacher says she's capable of doing it."

Also key is the kind of help teachers provide to their students. Many suburban students and their mothers report that teachers stayed after school to tutor them and to give them special lessons that would help them catch up. Even in high school, teachers were almost twice as likely to offer academic help in the suburbs than in the city (62% vs. 35%). "His [suburban] teacher tries to help each individual as they need it. They didn't do that in the city." "He was transferred from another class that was too slow for him. So now I think he's at the right speed." One city teacher actually told a mother that conditions in the city schools prevented her from helping capable students. "[My son's] teacher told me to try to get him away from the city--a city teacher told me that. ..She told me... he's too smart to be in this school."

Teachers can make a huge difference in both encouraging their students to attend college and guiding them to resources that will help them get to college. Suburban high schools provided access to colleges. None of the city mothers mentioned this about city schools. A number of suburban mothers reported high school teachers and counselors who helped their children find out about college, prepare for college, and get in touch with colleges. One suburban mother said, "One of the teachers found out that [my son] wasn't taking advanced courses and he got him taking advanced courses, you know. Oh Lord, you know [my son] is very interested in school and he puts it all there, so they be telling him about scholarships and things like that. Because they invited him to Purdue and the colleges are beginning [to] invite him to their colleges to look around." Another suburban mother said, "The counseling was very good. Now I did meet with the counselor several times. He would invite me in ...so I would know what the plans, good plans, would be for her toward college. He worked real hard to try to make sure that she was placed in a school that he felt that she was capable of -- that would be a challenge to her. The University of Illinois would

definitely be a challenge. And, with her grades and her aptitude she was able to handle that. She's doing real well in college [attending the University of Illinois]."

Suburban mothers and youth also note the influence of positive role models and peer pressure. "I saw that most of the kids in my classes wanted to go to college, and their older brothers and sisters were in college, so I thought I could do that too." Some suburban respondents compared their suburban and urban peers, noting that their peers in the city were negative models. "[What are the chances that you would have finished school in Chicago?] None. Like I said, peer pressure would bring you down. A lot of them are brung down. I seen this in my cousins. ... The attitudes changed about life. That's all they think is to get high." "My friends back in Chicago, are skipping (school) a lot. I would probably be hanging around with them." ["How do you think your life would have been different if your family had not been in the Gauxtreaux program?] It would have been worse. I had so many friends in the city and so many of my friends chose the opposite road that I did. I was a follower so a lot of kids influenced me when I was younger. I think I would have took a different approach towards school. When I got out here, I met friends with more values--telling me that it was better to stay in school."

Conclusions

The Permanent Disadvantage Hypothesis suggested that suburban movers would do worse than city-movers in school and in jobs 1) because of higher academic standards in the suburban schools than in city schools and 2) because of discrimination by school staff or employers. Our findings indicate that despite these barriers, suburban Gautreaux youths' academic and employment achievements were at least as good as their city counterparts, and often better. Rather than hinder the students, the higher academic standards may have had beneficial effects. Likewise, despite whatever fears employers may have about hiring non-white youth who lack middle-class backgrounds, the suburban movers are working at a higher rate and with better benefits than their city counterparts.

This paper has found that compared with city-movers, suburban movers are more likely to be 1) in high school, 2) in a college high school track, 3) in a 4 year college, 4) in a job, 5) in a job with benefits, and 6) not outside of the education and employment systems. In addition, the grades of the city youth and suburban youth do not differ significantly. Given the higher educational standards of suburban schools, as evidenced by their higher ACT and eleventh grade reading scores and much higher graduation rates than the city schools, the same absolute grades between the city and the suburban youth could be interpreted as indicating that the suburban children's grades are worth more in achievement terms.

These many positive aspects of living in the suburbs speak well for the effects of a housing program such as Gautreaux. This program provides no additional educational or psychological counselling services or assistance, so the observed effects arise solely from living in areas where there are better opportunities.

In the employment arena, they show that helping low-income families move to areas with better job availability benefits the youth in the family. Not only do these youth find jobs, but they receive better pay than they would in the city, and receive job benefits more frequently than if they worked in the city.

In education, the youth also benefit from being in areas where the educational standards are higher. Initially children had a great deal of catching up to do, and it was a difficult struggle for one or two years. Their grades initially declined, and they had to spend much more time on homework. But these results indicate that they did it. That shows a lot of strength in these low-income black youth. When given the opportunity, they can rise to the challenge. The long-term implication is that more of these youth will receive better education, and continue into better college and job opportunities than if they had stayed in the city.

The Gautreaux program has shown how a program which was designed only to provide more equality in housing opportunities can have many other far-reaching effects. The

participants who moved to areas where the job opportunities are better and the educational standards are higher are able to improve their lives in many ways.

These findings also have important implications for policy. They show that socio-economic and racial desegregation is possible, and that low-income blacks can benefit from living in middle-class white suburbs. They also show the benefits of offering housing counselling. Previous housing voucher programs which did not provide housing counselling rarely led to socio-economic or racial integration (Cronin and Rasmussen, 1981). By locating available housing, counselling people about the advantages and disadvantages of these distant locations, and taking people to visit these apartments, the Gautreaux program succeeded in placing thousands of families in white, middle-class suburbs.

Finally, at a time when this nation is deciding whether to invest billions of dollars to rehabilitate old housing projects which segregate low-income children in neighborhoods that have poor schools and few jobs, this study shows that a housing certificate program can improve children's education and their lives.

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